

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1987

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STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

INTRODUCTION OF TRADE BILL

I AM JOINING A NUMBER OF MY COLLEAGUES TODAY IN INTRODUCING AN IMPORTANT TRADE MEASURE FOR CONSIDERATION IN THIS BODY. IT IS THE PRODUCT OF MUCH WORK BY SENATORS BENTSEN AND DANFORTH, AMONG OTHERS, AND THEY DESERVE OUR GRATITUDE FOR THEIR DILIGENT EFFORTS TO PRESS TRADE LEGISLATION FORWARD.

I AM JOINING THEM TO INDICATE MY STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE ENACTMENT OF A TRADE BILL THIS YEAR, AND MY CONVICTION THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE A SUCCESSFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE OUTCOME ONLY THROUGH BIPARTISAN EFFORTS WHICH ALSO INVOLVE CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND THE WHITE HOUSE.

CONCERN ABOUT CERTAIN PROVISIONS

IT IS NO SECRET THAT I HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE BILL. I HAVE DISCUSSED THEM WITH SENATOR BENTSEN. I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO RETAIN DISCRETION IN ACCEPTING AND IMPLEMENTING REMEDIES PROPOSED BY OTHERS, PARTICULARLY WHEN, AS IN THE CASE OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION, THESE OTHERS ARE NOT ELECTED OFFICIALS.

I AM ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT TYING THE HANDS OF AN ADMINISTRATION IN REQUIRING IT TO RETALIATE IN SO-CALLED "301" MARKET-OPENING CASES NO MATTER WHAT THE POSSIBLE FOREIGN POLICY OR ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES. AND THERE MAY BE SOME OTHER THINGS--THE PARTICULAR PROCEDURES FOR FAST-TRACK NEGOTIATING AUTHORITY--WHICH NEED REFINING.

BILL IS IMPORTANT STARTING POINT

BUT THESE ARE MATTERS WHICH CAN BE LOOKED AT MORE CLOSELY, AND CREATIVELY ADDRESSED, AS THE LEGISLATION MOVES THROUGH THE COMMITTEE PROCESS. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO BE WEDDED TO EVERY SINGLE PROVISION OF A 200-PAGE BILL TO BELIEVE THAT THAT BILL IS IMPORTANT AND WORTHWHILE. WE NEED A STARTING POINT. SENATOR BENTSEN AND SENATOR DANFORTH ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED FOR PROVIDING ONE.

AND WE NEED A TRADE BILL NOW. THE TRADE DEFICIT FIGURES FOR DECEMBER IMPROVED MARKEDLY FROM PREVIOUS MONTHS, BUT WE ARE STILL IN CRITICAL STRAITS. THE REFORMS PROPOSED IN THIS BILL REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT EFFORT TO ADDRESS MANY OF THE CONCERNS WE HAVE HAD IN CONGRESS ABOUT UNFAIR FOREIGN TRADE PRACTICES, CLOSED FOREIGN MARKETS, AND THE ADMITTED NEED OF MANY OF OUR DOMESTIC FIRMS AND INDUSTRIES TO ADJUST TO THE CHANGING REALITIES OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION.

~~THE BILL WHICH WE SUBMIT DOES NOT PRETEND TO OFFER ALL THE ANSWERS TO OUR TRADE PROBLEMS. IT IS INCREASINGLY BEING~~
RECOGNIZED THAT MANY LARGER ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCE OUR INTERNATIONAL TRADE POSITION: EXCHANGE RATES, RELATIVE RATES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AMONG OUR TRADING PARTNERS, RISING DEBT BURDENS OF LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

IMPORTANCE OF ADMINISTRATION BILL

MOREOVER, AS A RESULT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S OUTSTANDING RECENT EFFORTS, THE EYES OF THE NATION HAVE NOW BEEN FOCUSED ON THE CENTRAL IMPORTANCE OF COMPETITIVENESS TO THE RESTORATION OF AMERICA'S ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND INFLUENCE.

INDEED, IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT I EXPECT TO SUPPORT THE ADMINISTRATION'S COMPETITIVENESS PACKAGE, WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO BE SUBMITTED LATER THIS MONTH. IT IS, OF COURSE, A MUCH BROADER PIECE OF LEGISLATION THAN THE BILL BEING INTRODUCED TODAY, AND IT ATTEMPTS TO MOUNT AN ATTACK ON THE TRADE PROBLEM IN THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE POSSIBLE WAY.

IT IS MY HOPE THAT, IN THE SAME SPIRIT OF BIPARTISANSHIP WHICH HAD BEEN SHOWN WITH RESPECT TO THE BILL OF SENATORS BENTSEN AND DANFORTH, WE CAN HAVE IN THIS CHAMBER A DISPLAY OF BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION'S BILL. I HOPE THAT MY COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE JOINED IN SPONSORSHIP OF THE BILL TODAY WILL JOIN AS WELL IN INTRODUCING THE ADMINISTRATION'S BILL WHEN THE TIME COMES.

WE MUST NOT FOOL OURSELVES: THE TRADE CRISIS IS NOT QUICKLY GOING AWAY, AND ONLY BY WORKING TOGETHER--ONLY BY PUTTING ASIDE PARTISAN AND IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES--CAN WE ADDRESS THAT CRISIS WITH THE URGENCY AND THE STATESMANSHIP THAT IT DEMANDS.

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